MODERN TIMES is six-years young this month. The staff of MODERN TIMES would like to thank all our friends for making last year, a very good year. We also look to the future for continuing success in our endeavor to bring the news of labor and of the community to the people of New Haven. Thank you.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

May Day Celebrates Worker Solidarity

by Modern Times Staff

May Day, May 1, symbolizes the struggle for better working and living conditions led by the working people of the world. Throughout the world there are demonstrations and celebrations. In the United States May Day has a special meaning. It commemorates the struggle for the eight-hour day and the tragedy of the Haymarket Affair.

As early as the 1880's , a shorter work day had long been a major goal for labor organizations. They wanted to decrease the number of hours of toil and cut the numbers of unemployed by spreading out available work. In the 1830's and 1840's labor reform movements pushed for the legislation that would first establish the ten hour day and ultimately the eight hour day. Although the legislation passed it was not enforced. Some trades attempted to enforce the regulations but with limited success.

The Movement is Started

In 1884, an organization, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, passed a resolution that " eight hours shall constitute a legal work day's work from and after May 1, 1886."

Very slowly the groundwork of a general strike grew as other methods and smaller strikes for the eight hour day were proving unsuccessful. Few existing organizations wanted to take the responsibility for the enormous event and the Federation was unable to run the demonstration. But the idea had finally caught on with many workers and The Eight Hour Movement spread throughout the unions' rank and file. In addition, Eight Hour Leagues were established .

Finally, on May 1, 1886, almost 350, 000 workers participated in demonstrations in Milwaukee, Saint Louis, Cincinnati, Washington, Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia , Boston and other cities under the leadership of many unions such as the American Federation of Labor and other labor organizations(Knights of Labor, one of the most respected unions of the day, did not support the demonstration.)

Violence at Haymarket

In Chicago alone, 80,000 workers demonstrated. The immediate result was that about 185,000 workers gained a shorter work day.

The May 1 demonstration had been well-organized and peaceful. However, on May 3 violence occured in Chicago at a strike that followed a lock-out at the McCormack Harvesting Works. The strike was a difficult one. Strike breakers were used with the help of the police. As a result, one striker was killed and many more seriously injured. Many labor leaders were enraged and called for a protest rally the following evening, May 4, at Chicago's Haymarket Square.

The rally was not well attended, partly because of the bad weather. Towards the end of the rally, during the last speech, the police arrived and asked the crowd to disperse. Within a moment a bomb was thrown which killed seven policemen and four workers and injured many others.

The general reaction was of fear and anger. The anarchists were blamed for it though the identity of the bomb thrower has never been discovered. Among those arrested were eight social revolutionaries (anarchists)in the Chicago area. They included Albert Parsons, August Spies, Samuel Fielden, George Engel, Adolph Fisher, Michael Schwab, Oscar Beebe and Lewis Lingg.

The Trial

At the trial it was proven that six of the defendants had not even been at the rally. Nevertheless of the eight men, seven were condemned to death, one sentenced to imprisonment. The court decided that these men had all expressed ideas that advocated the violent overthrow of the established government. As a result of mass protests, three had their sentences changed to life imprisonment. The other four were executed on November 11, 1887, though they too protested their innocence to the end.

The result of these events has been difficult to determine. Certainly after Haymarket, repressive measures against labor increased. Anti-union detectives, press, troops, injuctions, and courts were used more openly and generally. The establishment had shown that the eight hour day movement and the labor movement itself were formidable enemies and that they would be willing to use any means necessary to destroy their enemy.

Nevertheless, the events of these few days also showed the significance of mass actions and the potential power of the workers when they got together and fought for something they wanted.

MODERN TIMES

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New Haven

Vol. VI., No. 1 May 1-15, 1975

AIM Views '76 Budget

Speaking for the American Independent Movement (AIM) – the political organization founded in 1966 to run Bob Cook for Congress in 1966 and 1968 and active in New Haven politics since that time – spokesperson Rick Wolff made the following response to the *city budget for Fiscal year 1976*

"From Grasso in Hartford and Guida in New Haven, the budget-making processes deserve to be called nothing less than a betrayal of the working people whose majority elected these officials.

"Guida's proposed budget is a political ploy designed to fool people. He and Barbieri hope that the desperate need of thousands of New Haveners to avoid higher taxes will make them buy a budget that attacks and weakens the quality of public education as well as other public services-just when they are most needed in these times of recession.

Business Interests at Heart

"The proposed budget is the result of years of a Guida mayorality that serves best the larger business interests as well as those who become rich by serving those interests. The proposed budget draws no new revenues from a general property reassessment long overdue, or from a municipalization of the United Illuminating company whose profits would flow into the city treasury, or from taxation of Yale University-to mention but a few examples.

"Guida has served the powers that be in New Haven very well; So does the latest budget. And so does his publicity effort to fool people into thinking that the only choice is between more taxes and reduced services. **There is another choice: Maintain the services while raising revenue from those most able to pay.**

"We trust that thousands of New Haveners will not be fooled. We hope that Guida will not get the votes to continue to misdirect New Haven's political affairs. We also know that neither the Republican Party, nor its candidate John Esposito, offers the slightest hope of something better.

"What New Haven needs is a new, third political party built to serve the majority.

inside

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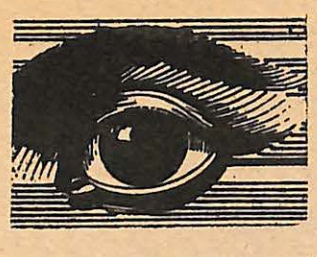


eye on the board

Aldermen Complacent About Budget

by Andrew J. Esposito
Modern Times Staff

On April 22 the Board of Aldermen received New Haven's $80.2 million budget for fiscal year 1976. After receiving the approximately 500 page document, the board set May 8 as the date for a public hearing on its contents. A key feature of the city's budget is the maintaining of the current 82.2 mill (8.22%) property tax rate.

The "holding of the line" on the mill rate elicited a favorable response from the board's Democratic leadership. Only Alderwoman Rosalind Berman (R-29) rose to chide the Board of Finance for its failure to hold public hearings. In the future, under the city's new charter, the Board of Finance will have to hold public hearings befor submitting the budget to the Aldermen.

Budget Message

The Board of Finance's message, accompanying the budget, stressed that a property tax increase was inadvisable. Therefore, given the increasing rate of inflation, the Guida Administration is looking into the possible reduction of the municipal workforce. The Board of Finance did hold out the slim possibility of additional revenues being found to offset staff reductions.

In reality, the aldermen have no choice but to accept the budget as proposed by the finance board. Since they must act on the budget proposal next month, it is unlikely that many aldermen will devote much time to studying the document. Thus, as in past years, a budget which has little citizen input will guide the priorities of local government.

The new city charter will provide a partial cure for this sad state of affairs. The next time around the Board of Finance will have to hold public hearings. Unfortunately, simply holding public hearings is no guarantee that the public's needs will be reflected in the city's budget. So other ways must be found.

Strengthen Alderman's Hand

One way, admittedly a small one, is to provide a competent staff for the Board of Aldermen. At present they have a small legislative services staff. The problem is that it is small. There is no way it can digest information, such as the budget, and make it understandable to a majority of the board members.

Therefore, the staff should be expanded; not with political hacks, but with competent people. This is not a new idea. In fact, a similar staff system was proposed for Congress several years ago. It's clear that a part time Aldermanic board, such as New Haven's, needs such help if they are to properly represent their constituents.

A second way to increase aldermanic power is to give them the authority to reject mayorality appointments. The board should have the power, for example, to pass on who should be the city's controller. There is no sense in having all top administrative appointments not approved by the aldermen.

However, let us not foolourselves. These simple changes will not, in themselves, guarantee a better procedure. Yet they should be made; for they are long overdue.

Oversight Function

It would be more helpful to institute citizen supervision of the Board of Finance. We need laws which open all meetings of the finance board to the public. Maybe not many people would attend such meetings, but the possibility of a large public turn out coupled with the pressure of news coverage would open up the budget making process.

The ultimate form of public oversight would be elections. Thus it is tempting to advocate an elected Board of Finance. Yet, we all know that, at present, the Democratic machine controls New Haven's political scene. So, in all probability, having an elected finance board will not make much of a difference.

Then, can anything be done? The answer is yes. But it may take time. The citizens of New Haven can begin to build an alternative to the Republican and Democratic parties.

Any alternative party should be one which suits the needs of New Haveners. It should be a party controlled by them. The party might come into being this year or we might have to wait until 1977 or 1979.

One thing is clear, we must begin now if eventually New Haveners are to gain control over things such as the city budget.

Nick Heyer

A year ago this issue, MODERN TIMES carried the story of this West Haven picket by area labor groups. The picket protested educational cuts and contract disputes of the teachers and paraprofessionals with the city of West Haven.. The West Haven Teachers just settled their contract.

Budget Process Still Poor

by Modern Times Staff

Last November, New Haven voters passed a charter reform package. However, the framers of the ballot questions left off an effective date for implementation thus invalidating the vote.

There is currently legislation pending in Hartford to try and undo this blunder. Until then, we are working under the old charter. What is the budget making process under the old charter?

Old Charter

At present, the budget is made as follows:

1) Board of Finance submits proposed budget to Board of Aldermen by the third Monday in April.

2) Within ten days, the proposed budget must be published once in each of the daily newspapers.

3) By the third Monday in May the Board of Aldermen must act on the budget. They can cut the budget by a 2/3 vote (except for debt service) or send it back to the Board of Finance. However, if no final action is taken by the third Monday of May, the proposal of the Board of Finance becomes law.

Charter Revisions

With the charter revision the budget would be as follows:

1) Board of Finance must publicize their proposal by the first Monday in April and hold a public hearing within seven days of publication.

2) The Board of Finance must submit their proposed budget to the Board of Aldermen by the third Monday in April.

3) Within ten days, the proposed budget must be published once in each of the daily newspapers.

4) Before the first Monday in June, the Board of Aldermen must hold a public hearing on the proposed budget.

5) On or before the first Monday in June, the Board of Aldermen can:

a. reject the budget by a majority vote;

b. decrease the budget by a majority vote except for debt service;

c. Increase items within the total budget limits and tax rate set by the Board of Finance (by majority vote).

If no action is taken by the first Monday in June the proposed budget becomes law!

W.H. Teachers Settle

by Stanley Heller
President of the West Haven Federation of Teachers.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Views expressed are personal and not those of the WHFT.

Teacher unions are going to have to develop new strategies or they're going to fade away. All across the state, contract settlements have been terrible. Raises have averaged 4.5% considerably less than raises negotiated by industrial unions. Gains in working conditions and educational quality have been microscopic.

In West Haven we just settled a two year contract after 14 months of negotiations. Wages will rise approimately 4% in each year. In the second year a medical insurance benefit worth 0.3% will be added. Our grievance procedure was strengthened in several small but important areas.

Job Protection

In the critical area of job protection our gains were meager. *The Borad refused to agree to any contract language on layoffs.* It said it would layoff by least seniority as a matter of written Board policy. It would not agree to be bound by any language on the procedure for recalling teachers who had been laid off.

Teacher unions are in trouble because their bargaining power is fading at the same time that most cities are in trouble financially. Their power is declining while the pressures on them increase.

For all workers the potential of strike is the base of bargaining power. This potential is being seriously weakened in teacher unions because of two factors. The first factor is the tougher enforcement of the anti-strike laws. The second is the growth of an army of job hungry unemployed teachers.

Building Pressures

The power to strike is declining just when the cities are taking radically harder bargaining positions. The cities' poverty plea is an old saw, but as the national economy reels from inflation to depression, the effects on city budgets are catastrophic.

Costs for electricity and transportation skyrocket. Banks rip off more money in interest on loans. The property base doesn't expand and revenue stands still. Raising the local property tax rate is always political dynamite. So cities cut services and lower the boom on employees.

If teacher unions continue to use the old strategies, they may be headed for oblivion. We can't just demand money from towns. We've got to exert real pressure to get massive amounts of money out of the state and federal governemtns. Our national wealth hasn't disappeared. The government just has to put the bite on the corporations and millionaires to get some of it.

Right to Strike

More money to the towns is just one side of the picture. Schools and teachers won't get any of it if teachers don't have bargaining power. We've got to get the right to strike. The little games we play with courts to delay the fines and jail sentences just don't buy us enough time to win good settlements.

There is reallly nothing new in this analysis. Obviously the towns need money and we need the right to strike. The question is how do you get them?

The old strategy we've been following for years is to pour money into the Democratic party coffers and then lobby like mad for favorable legislation. Where has this gotten us? Congress has never voted a cent of general purpose money to the schools. Tax reform is as distant as ever. State politicians are no better.

Despite all the money labor gave to the Democratic campaign and despite the standing ovation Grasso received at the 1974 convention, the anti-strike laws are unchanged. Grasso spends half her time badmouthing the income tax, the easiest and fairest way to raise new money. She's even fighting the court decision requiring equal funding for education!

The politicians treat us with contempt because they know we won't stir up trouble. They'd sing a different tune if

see SOLIDARITY page 8

Workers Hard Hit By Uncertainty

by Modern Times Staff

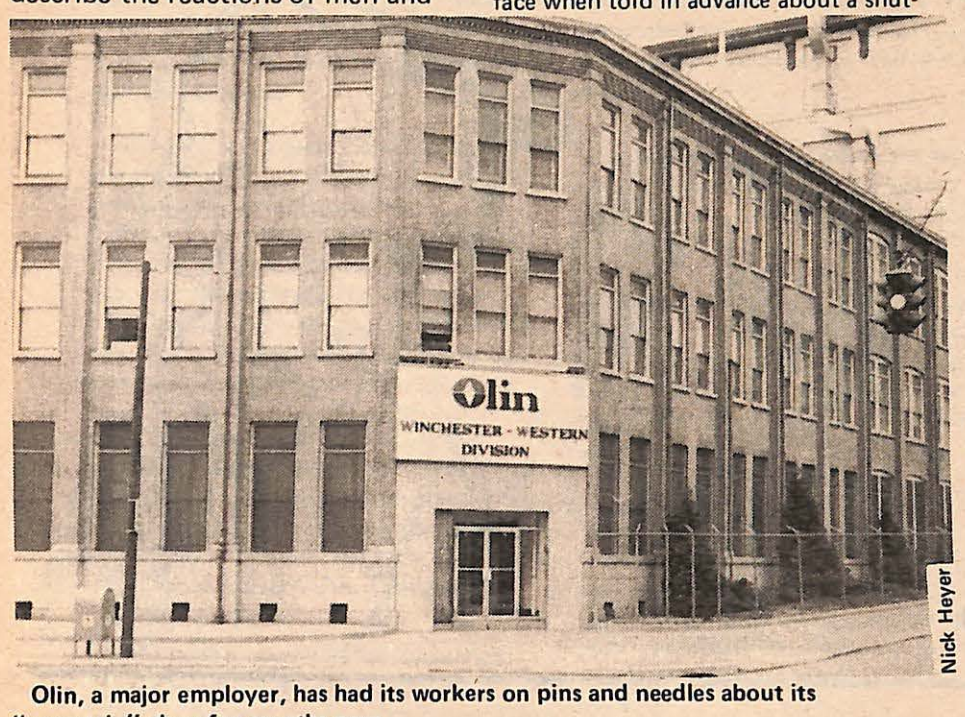
EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second article in a series which examines plant shutdowns and the dilemma that they pose for the workers.

Families affected by plant shutdowns have many different attitudes and things to say about what's happening to them. But, one common theme they all mention is the unbearable uncertainty they face day in and day out. Uncertainty, insecurity and fear justly describe the reactions of men and women and their families faced with a plant shutdown.

We conducted interviews with a sample of families who were facing what the owners and management called a "tentative" shutdown. All said they knew if they didn't quit on their own and look for new work, how they would have a harder time finding work at the last minute. Yet, they knew that the plant might not close and, since jobs were not easy to get anyway, it might be best to stay on at their jobs and hope the plant stays open.

Unclear Intentions

It is this sort of dilemma that workers face when told in advance about a shutdown, particularly when management is not perfectly clear about their intentions. This is often the case as management doesn't want workers leaving too soon causing lower production and profit margins.



Nick Heyer

Olin, a major employer, has had its workers on pins and needles about its "uncertain" plans for months now.

Another uncertainty felt by families, particularly ones where the breadwinner has seniority, is the worry about losing the wage increases and benefits accumulated over a period of time. These are almost always lost when shutdowns occur. What job prospects might be after the shutdown can not equalize the lost time and benefits.

Simple Disbelief

Another way uncertainty is felt is remarkably simple: disbelief and questioning when the shutdown announcement is made. One woman with 29 years experience in a plant said she felt "sharp pain and tears. It really hit hard when they told us. There wasn't a word in the place. My friends took it hard."

A middle-aged man complained that "it made people die a thousand deaths. There's no need for such baloney. It made people sick."

For many workers, the idea that a company would "reward" them for years of service and duty with a plant closure creates unbearable confusion , sadness and anger. But mostly it causes disbelief and uncertainty about the truth of the shutdown news.

Whose Responsible?

A problem for workers trapped by shutdowns is the question of who they feel is responsible for the situation in the first place. In the case of a large industrial plant in the Greater New Haven area, workers expressed a wide variety of opinions.

"Non-union workers in the south are costing us our jobs," said one veteran employee. Another said, " the government just refused to step in and do anything. Those guys in Washington don't give a damn about us." A younger worker with three years on the job felt that "management's been lax and hasn't done their job. They have a lot of dead wood up in those offices."

Dark Picture

What is missing from these words is the unstated but commonly understood blame that ownership and management share in the shutdown. Workers we talked to knew this but felt that it didn't serve any purpose in blaming management. As one worker near retirement said," they're just part of the big picture, the system and they have to play by the rules or else go out of business."

Thus workers are uncertain about describing why their plant is closing in a way which would allow them to feel that something realistic could be done. The workers understood perhaps better than anyone, how powerless they were in doing anything in this economic system to stop the plant from closing.

What Action?

This makes the question of what action, personal or together with fellow workers, to take much more difficult. Uncertainty then is the key word in understanding what workers go through during plant shutdowns. This provides us with an explantion of why we hear so little so often from people trapped by shutdowns.

In future articles we shall discuss why plants close, what attempts have been made to stem the tide of shutdowns and what future possibilities there might be to prevent what for many *is a tragic event.*

days gone by

Park Relieves Winter Humdrum

by Ed. Linehan
Modern Times Staff

It's spring! What's the matter that doesn't get you excited? Oh I see, some of you are right in the middle of the basketball playoffs and nothing is more important than the Boston Celtics being World Champs again. And you there, you have three term papers due in a couple of weeks and you haven't done any of the research yet. What's that, spring means lots of house cleaning and packing away winter clothes? We are really looking forward to the summer, when you can go to the beach, eat watermelon and sit outside talking with friends at night.

HOLD IT! You are missing out on a good thing. I know you have all these other responsibilities. And it's still sort of cold outside, and it's nice and warm in front of the TV. But it's spring! The sun is warm, brooks are bubbling, ducks and geese are building nests on lakes, trees are budding, flowers blooming, robins, bluejays and flocks of other birds are returning to the area. And look at yourself... what are you doing? ... the same humdrum that has been keeping you inside for six months.... Blah and double Blah!

Country is Close By

You say that you would like to get out of the house and enjoy the season, but the country is just too inconvenient. You think that you would have to drive an hour before you could find a place to relate to nature. WRONG! Even in heavy traffic you're no more than fifteen minutes away from good parks that are alive with activity, so no more excuses. Edgewood, West Rock and East Rock parks are probably the best known, but there are others. Each has its own special quality, but East Rock is my favorite.

East Rock Park is almost 100 years old, incorporated by the Conn. State General Assembly in 1880. Until that time the "mountain" had been owned privately by a series of people who were interesting characters in themselves. The park is probably the most versatile in New Haven. There are various trails to the summit with points of interest along the way, including an excellent view of the city, harbor and Quinnipiac River tidal marsh. The Mill River, starting at Whitney lakes, runs through the park at the mountain's base. The opportunities for nature study of flora and fauna are quite extensive.

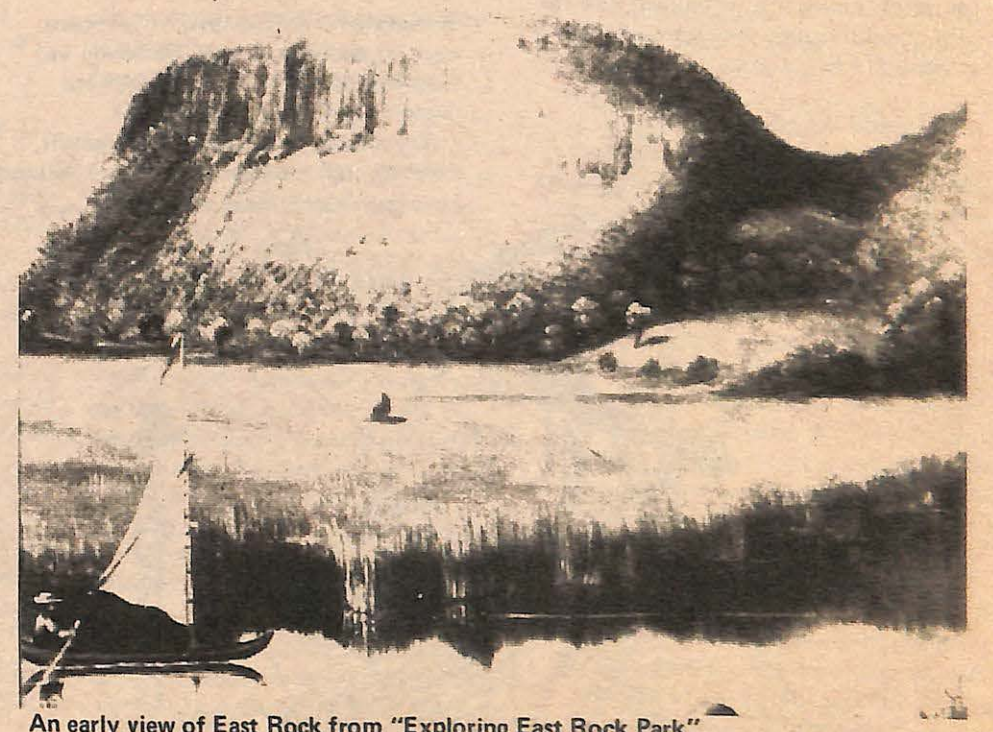
In addition there are green houses open to the public, pic-nic tables, playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, and open meadows for flying kites or playing ball. Now admit it, there has to be something here that interests you.

Eli Whitney Factory

Of particular interest to history buffs may be the original site of the Eli Whitney gun factory at the northwest end of the park near the waterfalls. There are three buildings still standing; a stone carpentry shop, a large barn and the single men's boarding house. This summer the National Park Service will be continuing its excavation of the factory buildings. There is some chance that the factory may be rebuilt and maintained as an historic landmark.

Well if I've sparked your interest in the park or its history enough so that you've read this far, then at least you have been away from all that other dribble for a few minutes. If you are interested in knowing more about the Park I strongly suggest you get a copy of **Exploring East Rock Park** (available in in the library). This paperback gives an excellent history, including pictures; provides a map; describes the plant and animal life; and gives information about all the recreational facilities available. Published by the East Rock Neighborhood Association, the funds raised by the book are used to support the Children's Summer Recreation Program.

Needless to say if you don't get out of the house real soon, you'll miss an exciting part of year, springtime. Why don't you decide right now to go to East Rock Park or some place like it..... see you feel better already.



An early view of East Rock from "Exploring East Rock Park".

Help Your Library

The budget of the New Haven Free Public Library has been cut drastically by the Board of Finance. The Library has been receiving only 1.1% of the total city budget, and this has now been cut by 4%. What this will mean to you, the public, is a reduction in library hours and services through a loss of personnel, curtailment of library programs, and a cut back in library materials- new books, magazines, newspapers, films and records. *Help save your library!* Write a letter protesting the library cuts and mail it a once to Mayor Guida, the Board of Finance, or your local aldermanic representative. For further information call Ken Haynam, Jane Moore or George Nowaki at 562-0151, ext. 1304.

editorial

Poor Education The Real Cost

Early in March, the New Haven Board of Education came up with a "bare minimum" budget to run the schools next year. Last week, the Board of Finance cut the request of the Board of Education by $3.1 million. Both the Mayor and the Superintendent of Schools maintain that even though the bare minimum has been cut, "the quality of education in New Haven will not suffer."

That was the same lie given at budget cutting time last year. This year, New Haven schools have fewer teachers (especially in special areas such as music, art and physical education), fewer books, less laboratory equipment and more $20/day substitute teachers filling the positions of full-time certified teachers. We have also just been told that the budget will be two million dollars short by the time June 30 rolls around.

What is at stake? For the Mayor it is only votes and the continuation of his $30,000 a year job. He just must believe that there are not enough people in New Haven who vote and who are concerned enough to vote against him.

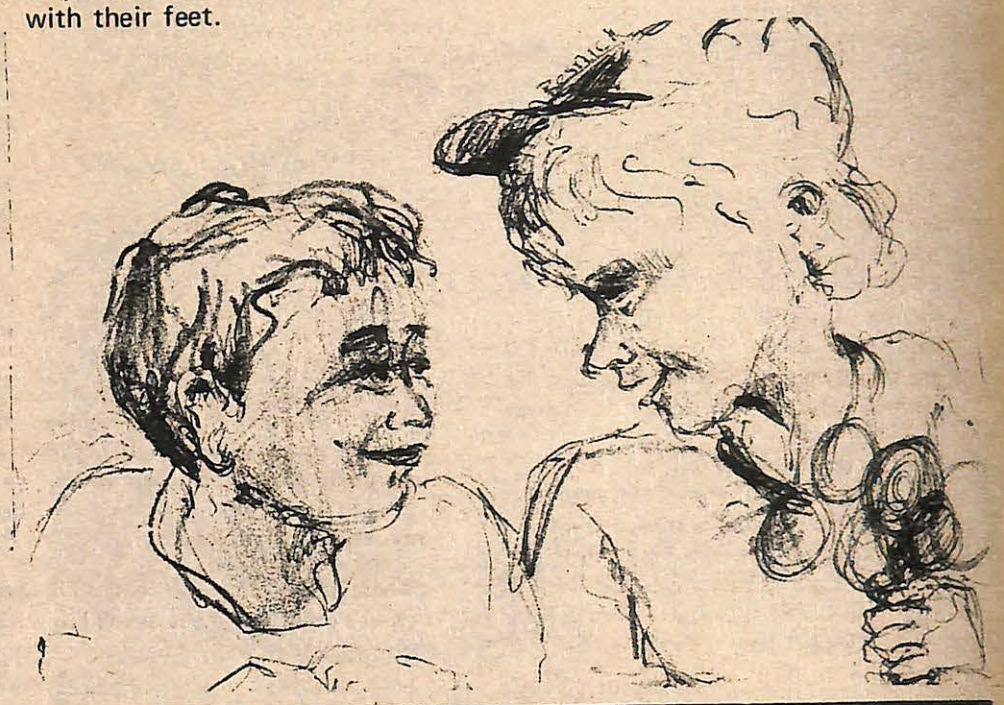
For the rest of us, there is much more at stake. An investment in education now is a sound investment for the future. The more education we have, the more productive human beings we can become and make greater contributions to society. It would be difficult to estimate the future costs we might incur in how much we might have to support people with a poor education.

Does more money make for better education? Not necessarily, but it sure helps. Ask any teacher, whether it makes a difference if there are 15, 20 or 30 students in a class--especially when 5 or 6 of the students have learning problems. Not many of New Haven's elementary schools have fulltime gym teachers, art teachers or music teachers.

There are not many choices for New Haven residents at this point. We are funding education with an unfair and outdated property tax system. An unelected but paid Board of Finance essentially makes the final decision on tax rates and appropriations. The elected, but unpaid Board of Aldermen can only rubber stamp or reject outright the recommendations of the Board of Finance.

In the short term, however, there is some possible remedy or at least some delay to the cutting procedure. The New Haven Board of Education, by state law, is an agent of the state government and must provide what they deem the best possible education to the children of the city. The New Haven Board of Education has claimed that $33.5 million is a bare minimum. Residents of New Haven could ask the state courts to force New Haven's government to uphold the law--that is--come up with the required money for education.

In the longer term, we should seek a city government that will fight for the working people in the city by not allowing any cuts in the quantity and quality of the education system. (Most wealthy people send their children to private schools.) If we judge a society or a government by the way it treats children, the current rating is very low. The "showplace" of the city is a coliseum, not the school system. Rehabilitation of Light House Park, New Haven's only beach was rejected in favor of a $10 million city hall complex and flood control in Morris Cove for 100 families at a cost of $3 million. . Superintendent of Schools George Barbarito made the most outlandish statement of all. He claimed that the issue of increased class size wasn't important because students wouldn't come to classes anyway. Perhaps that's the real education vote--the children--they vote with their feet.



money talks

Working People Still the Losers

by Rick Wolff
Modern Times Staff

Few government statistics are as useful as the U.S. Labor Department's index of "Urban Family Budgets." From these numbers anyone can learn about the real conditions of the American working class today. It is those conditions that determine the political life in this country more than anything else.

According to the Labor Department, in October, 1974, it cost the "typical" American family of four the sum of $14,300 a year to live a "modest but decent standard of living." This sum amounted to a 13.5 percent increase over the calculations made by the Department for October, 1973. To bring things up to date to May 1, 1975, we can safely count that a modest but decent standard costs the typical family at least $14,800 a year.

The Typical American Family

To drive home the point of all these numbers, it might help to remind our readers that in a family with one wage earner, this modest but decent standard of living means that the wage earner has to get $7.12 an hour.

The "typical" family used by the Labor Department statisticians has a father, 38 years old, who works full-time. His wife, to whom he has been married for 15 years, does not work for wages ever. Their two children, a son, 13, and a daughter, 8, do not bring in any money either. This "typical" family bought a house 6 years ago and owns one car (which was bought used).

The Real American Family

Now consider just a few more facts and the picture of American working class life becomes clearer. By latest Labor Department count, half of all American families earn less than $12,500, or well below "modest but decent" levels. Furthermore, millions of American families have wives and mothers who do full-time or part-time work in addition to their husbands--yet they still fall short of a "modest but decent" standard of living.

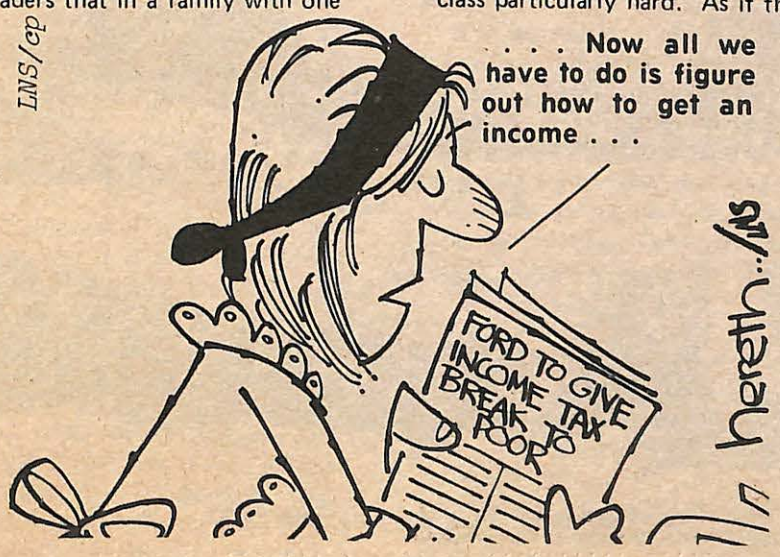
The current wave of unemployment, inflation, tax increases--all hit the working class particularly hard. As if that were not enough, politicians like Governor Grasso raise taxes (the sales tax and the gasoline tax) that fall especially hard on the majority, the families earning below a "modest but decent income."

Hard Facts

New Haven's Mayor Guida is no better. His claim to fame is not to raise taxes, by lowering the number of teachers and with it the quality of education for New Haven's public school kids. With poorer educations, it will be just that much harder for the children to achieve "modest but decent" standards when they grow up.

The hard facts of the matter are this: the American working class continues to be the underpaid, overtaxed majority. But this is a majority that does not rule, as it is supposed to in a democratic system.

Instead, the minority of big businesses and those who become rich by serving them rule. It is that class which causes recessions and also makes sure that the government doesn't penalize them for it. That class makes sure the majority takes it on the chin when times are hard. Grasso and Guida serve that class. A new political party must be built if the working classes' interests are to be served.



Volume VI Number 1
Circulation 4000

MODERN TIMES welcomes all comments and letters to the editors.

MODERN TIMES

Editorial 441 Chapel Street
Office 562-2510

MODERN TIMES is published by the American Independent Movement (AIM) as its political organ. Work on **MODERN TIMES** is done by volunteers, both members and non-members of AIM. The political views of AIM are given in the editorial. We encourage contributions from the New Haven community in the form of articles and letters.

MODERN TIMES is a paper to tell the story of and by the people of New Haven. We don't get this kind of news from profit-making commercial papers. There is no place else in New Haven where the problems of working men and women are told by them instead of their bosses. There is no place else where the problems of employment and education, and housing and health care are told by the people who have to live with them.

This is the richest country in the world. Yet most of the wealth is used only by a few. We must all work together to claim the wealth we all helped to create. There would be no need to strike for paltry raises, waste our resources and labor on missiles and bombs, or waste the lives of our young men in wars like Vietnam. We would produce what we need, not what is profitable.

The American Independent Movement has been working since 1966 to get people together against the vested interests that run New Haven and the whole country. We want everyone to have good housing, good education, child care centers, recreation areas, decent health care, and decent jobs.

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review
Book Burns American Myths

by Karen Rosenberg
Modern Times Staff

"The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire", by Corinne Naden.

There is a need for children's books that do not create a rosy picture of the American past and which show the problems of contemporary society. Corinne Naden's book on the famous sweatshop disaster fulfills the first requirement but not the second.

Although it is a good introduction to the history of the American labor movement, and an excellent account of the Triangle fire, it fails to pose the question "What are the goals of unions today?" In fact Ms. Naden creates the impression that the legislation which was passed after the tragedy leaves nothing further to be desired. This is, of course, not the case.

When dealing with the fire and its immediate consequences. Ms. Naden is at her best. She is clear and avoids repetition. Her account of the fire is accurate, as compared with other works on the subject such as Leon Stein's **The Triangle Fire,** written for adults.

The pictures and diagrams which are included here emphasize the major points: the crowded and unsafe working condition in the factory. Her account of the trial does not uphold the conventional myth that justice is always served in court. *It is a good to find a children's* book that does not turn America into a never-never land.

Not Pro-Union

There are some issues, however, on which Ms. Naden, perhaps without knowing it, sounds anti-union. She defines an open shop as "a factory in which workers are free to decide whether or not to join the union." Reading this statement, every American schoolchild would conclude that a closed shop is undemocratic. Ms. Naden should have added that open shops destroyed the bargaining power of many unions, since management deliberately hired non-union workers.

She is also misleading when she says that the black list kept by employers "contained the names of trouble -makers—usually workers involved in a union." The word "trouble-maker" is a term that the employer would use. By including it in her text, Ms. Naden suggests that she thinks union workers are trouble-makers. The words "fussily feminine "in this book smack of sexism of which Ms. Naden may or may not been aware.

Important Small Points

These may seem to be small points but a child's point of view is formed by such slight suggestions. It is regrettable that such a fine book should be marred by these minor, but nevertheless significant, remarks.

The Triangle Fire would be most suited for children 12 to 16 years old. Through the bibliography, it shows them where to *turn for more information on the fire* itself and on labor history. Its index *is useful and* shows them the foremost of more sophisticated histories. In short, this is not an overly simplified job, although intended for younger adults.

As a result of the doors being locked.....146 workers died.

HHC to Hold Elections

by Hill Health Center

The Fifth Annual Elections of the Hill Health Corporation(HHC) Board of Directors will be held May 1 through May 10th at the Hill Health Center, 428 Columbus Ave. The HHC Board is the governing and policy making body of the Hill Health Center and is composed of 21 members, a majority live in the Hill.

Seven of these are elcted by the Center's patients for a two year term. Another seven are representatives of major health agencies which serve residents of the Hill community. The remaining seven members are appointed community-at-large representatives.

The members of the Board elect the following officers: President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. All of the officers are community representatives. There are nine candidates nominated to run in this year's election, three of whom are seeking re-election to the Board.

Bernard Clean, 701 Howard Ave., for re-election. A resident of the Hill for the past five years, he views the first priority of the Center as relocation into a more adequate building.

Evelyn Graves, 705 Washington Ave., for re-election. Mrs. Graves is a Lincensed Practical Nurse(LPN) and has served as Board Treasurer since 1972.

Clarence Newman. 703 Howard Ave., for re-election. He has been a resident of the Hill for 46 years and he also views the top priority of the Center as relocation.

Irma Coleman, 31 Liberty Street. Mrs. Coleman is a Spanish-speaking resident and hopes to represent that section of the community.

Betty Ann Conroy, 51 Lines Street. Ms. Lines, a resident of the Hill all her life, sees the Hill as the most together neighborhood in the city.

Delores Fischer, 7-A Station Court. She would like to become involved with counciling young drug addicts and wants to improve some of the support services for the Center, such as transportation.

Isabel Harris, 226 Davenport Ave. She would like to direct her energies toward helping the Center to continue to receive federal funds.

Georgina Mattei, Rob. Wolfe Apts., 49 Union Ave. Georgina has lived in New Haven most of her life, is retired and concerned about the elderly people and what they would do if there were no center.

Evelyn Rogers. Mrs. Rogers has worked with the elderly and has helped coordinate HHC services to the residents.

In order to vote in the elections, you must 1) be a HHC patient or the parent or guardian of a patient; 2) be sixteen years of age or older.

Ballots will be cast at the Election Desk from May1 to May 10 during the regular operating hours of the Center: Mon., Tues., and Thurs., 9:30 am to 8:30 pm; Wed., and Fri., 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. ; and Sat., 9:00 am to 12:00 noon.

For more information about the candidates, call the Hill Health Center at 432-4400.

Day Care Struggling

by Modern Times Staff

"Kids are the last thing that count in inner-city day care," says a woman long active in New Haven child care. The woman, who asked not to be identified, is among a number of growing voices of discontent with publicly-funded, city-administered day care.

The following interview will suggest the reasons for that dissatisfaction. Subsequent inteviews will attempt to present views of other New Haven day care forces, including center administrators, Inner City Daycare Council (ICDCC) board members, and parents with children in day care.

"Day care is a struggle for power and jobs, with kids getting lost in the shuffle," the woman says, adding that at the state level, "efficiency" and cost-cutting take priority over human needs.

"There was something sick about the way it was all set up," she says. Community Progress, Inc.(CPI) the New Haven agency charged with creating centers and administering funds for the state Department of Community Affairs(DCA)"cared about numbers, not about the quality of program or the involvement of parents."

CPI picked directors with little experience with children or administration, created poor programs and gave little assistance to the fledging programs. "They created little monsters, thinking, we'll upgrade them later." But once directors had tasted power, she says, they were not about to give it up, or change their ways. "CPI should have ensured that each board have parent and staff participation. It was a sloppy, haphazard use of funds."

Community Control Questioned

Then DCA, in an effort to cut costs, decided to put all its centers under the control of one central group. Last fall, CPI lost the funding package to the Inner City Day Care Council, who claimed to be better qualified to be that central agency. ICDCC claimed to be more knowledgeble about kids, more representative of the community.

Is this really community controlled day care? "If community means the people actually involved in day care— the parents and caretakers of the children served—absolutely not! " charges this disenchanted worker. She describes the ICDCC board members as officials—active in local politics, lacking knowledge or concern about the needs of children. Several of the 11 inner city day care centers are completely unrepresented on the board, and some of the most powerful council forces, like Jan Parker(wife of State Treasurer Hank Parker and owner of a suburban profit-making center)have no ties but political ties to the inner city community.

Parent Input

Do parents have a voice in their children's care? "Definitely not, " she says. The original ICDCC board had no parent representatives. Parent and staff have been excluded or made unwelcome at their meetings. Although DCA recently insisted that parent representatives be included, ICDCC still puts politics first, she says. Now that DCA requires parents on the board, a typical case is that the one parent chosen is also a local politician, "more concerned about collecting constituencies than about ensuring good care for kids."

Asked about DCA criterion for day care, this worker says,"all DCA cares about is cut, cut , cut!" They spend too little time per child and are now cutting costs by firing local administrators, the people close to children and family needs, and putting them all under the control of ICDCC. "ICDCC is going into established centers firing and hiring personnel, cutting back staff. Centers are being robbed of their autonomy, their individuality, their potential for giving care responsive to the people served." She commented "centralization may be efficient, but is it human?"

All the research shows that institutionalization is the worst thing for our kids—impersonal settings, too few caring adults to give each child the warmth they need to grow and learn. Our money is best spent building small comprehensive units that know their own children and give them the care they need?"

Co-ops

What about parent cooperatives—are they the solution to daycare bureaucracy. "Not for everyone they're not. Most people work from 9 to 5 and can't work at parent cooperatives.

What about proposed legislation to exempt parents cooperatives from state day care regulations and allow more parent co-ops to flourish? Won't caring parents provide good children? "Sure, many parents care about their children, but what's to stop people who don't care from claiming to be a co-op just to evade standards." She added, "Sure, some of the codes are oppressive and do prevent new centers from getting started. We need to change them for all kids, and fortunately there's a group now working with the fire commissioneer to write better codes."

In addition to noting the bill's dangers, she concluded: "What really saddens me is that here again, each little group is fighting only for its own.

Why can't we have a **coalition** of people who care about **all kids** who need care?"

Workshop Tells of Food Stamp Values

by Nick Heyer
Modern Times Staff

A very informative workshop on the Food Stamp program in Connecticut was sponsored by the New Haven Coalition for Welfare Reform on Wednesday, April 16. Marilyn Katz, a member of Food Emergency Action Development (FEAD) and a lawyer in a recent court case (Tyson v. Ct.) that shook up the Connecticut program, was the speaker.

The workshop was organized in conjunction with Food Day (April 17) as an initial effort to activate concerned citizens. Over 30 people, mostly members of community and social service agencies, gathered to learn more about Food Stamps and how to increase local participation in the program.

Nick Heyer

Marilyn Katz, from FEAD, addresses the conference.

What Are Food Stamps

The Food Stamps Program is federally funded. It is intended to help improve the food purchasing power of low income households. This is done by selling food coupons (stamps) to these households for less than their face value. The coupons can be used at food stores for their full face value, only for the purchase of food.

The amount of stamps a household may purchase is determined solely by the number of people in the household, the value being based upon a minimal requirement for proper nutrition. The amount a household must pay for the stamps is determined by their income with adjustments made for shelter, medical expenses, etc.

There are between 17 and 18 million Americans participating in the Food Stamp program (1 out of 12). It is estimated that there are an equal number of people who are eligible to receive food stamps but do not. The workshop asked the question: why are so many people *not taking advantage of this program?*

Some Problems

According to Ms. Katz, there is a two fold problem. First, many people do not know the program exists, or are not aware that it may apply to them. Second, the complexity of the program, the barriers, and the stigma of welfare stop people from applying.

The first problem obviously demands more publicity about the program. One concept--the household--is generally misunderstood. Stamps are given to a "household" which may or may not be a "family." A household must meet all three of the following standards: 1) share cooking facilities; 2) buy food together; 3)live as an economic unit (provide for each member's needs without regard to whose income or resources may be used). Thus it *is possible to be living as a single household even if you are unrelated, or be living as two or more separate households while sharing rent and food.*

Change in Attitude

The second problem demands a change in attitudes for both the public and the state. While food stamps are processed by the state welfare department, they are not a welfare or public assistance program. Since the program is totally funded by federal money, it is not a burden on the state. In fact, food stamps brought $25 million into Connecticut last year. This is money that must be spent in local food stores and thus supports local farmers.

With this in mind, it is difficult to figure why the state has been so unwilling to push food stamps and to simplify their procedures. Instead, offices are understaffed and often the staff have not been properly trained. Information is *difficult to get. Appliants meet difficulties,* delays and are sometimes refused rightful claims. One such person took Connecticut to court.

The Court Decision

The decision of the court in Tyson v. Ct. clearly states that full implementation of the Food Stamp program is the state's responsibility. The court ordered a two part remedy of outreach and simplified procedures. The outreach program establishes a full time state director and staff. It requires advertisement (including television) for the program or major program changes, an information "hot line", local outreach offices, and door to door canvassing in highly populated low income areas.

Ms. Katz suggested, at the workshop, that the door to door canvassing was the only way to assure increased participation in the food stamp program. She stated that the outreach demanded by the court was not a one shot deal, but required a continued effort that would be reviewed by the court.

Easier Procedures

The court's ruling on simplified procedures includes a number direct instructions dealing with delay and physical ease of application. In cases where personal appearances are a hardship the court offers the mail, telephone, or home interviews as substitutes. Specific reasons for requesting one of these alternatives were listed as: sickness, injury, lack of transportation, a child or someone else who needs attention, age, blindness, or disability. There may be other reasons not listed.

Some major points covered were:
Application: *immediate* application must be available *without* an appointment or waiting. Application may be made by mail.
Interview: may request telephone or home interview as described above.
Time Delay: an applicant *must* receive his or her Authorization Purchase Card (APC) *within 30 days* of the *initial* application. This card authorizes the purchase of food stamps *(available at banks).* If processing or verification cannot be completed within 30 days, the applicant's claim *must* be assumed in order and authorization given *without further delay.*
Emergency Situations: In an extreme emergency where a household cannot afford to purchase food stamps, they must be provided free. The maximum time delay in emergencies is seven days.
Loss of APC: if an authorization card is lost, it must be replaced *immediately.* Loss may be reported by phone if personal appearance is a hardship.
Variable Purchase: the APC card must contain the option to purchase less than the whole value (¼, ½ or 3/4) of the food stamps allowed. This is for people who cannot afford to purchase the full amount. A person may also request to receive *at least* two APC authorizations a month (instead of one) to help spread the required cash outlay.
Missed Benefits: any benefits that have been missed due to a violation of the above procedures *must be made up* by reducing the costs of future benefits.

Get Your Rights

The purpose of the Wednesday workshop on food stamps was to help people in the New Haven area get the benefits they deserve. The participants saw their role as first getting information to people, and second, helping people with applications. If you need help applying, get in touch with your nearest social service agency, or write to the Taxpayers Coalition for Welfare Reforem, One State Street, New Haven.

If you want more information, there is an excellent booklet called a Guide to the Food Stamp Program. It is put out by Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), 25 w. 43rd Street, New York 10036, and costs 50 cents. The booklet shows how to determine if you are eligible for food stamps, and if you are, your exact benefits. Finally, if you have tried to apply for food stamps and cannot get satisfaction, you or the agency helping you should contact Marian Katz at FEAD to see what legal measures can be taken.

open line

Reader Airs Candidate Views

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lynn Karsten is one of our readers and has asked us to print her views on the election at the Community Health Care Plan(CHCP.)

In May, enrollees in the Community Health Care Plan will have their first opportunity to elect Subscriber Members to CHCP's Board of Directors. Thirty members of the plan have been selected by the nominating committee to run for the 9 slots designated for the consumers. (The total Board size is 36.) According to the present by-laws of CHCP only the primary enrolled ployees or other primary subscribers will be eligible to vote.

Eligible voters will be able to cast their ballots during the week of May 13-18, 1975 at CHCP during its regular working hours(the Center plans to open for a period of time both Sat. and Sun. for voting.) They may also vote at the first annual meeting of CHCP, which will be held on Thurs. May 21 at 7 pm at Lyman Hall, Southern Conn. State College.

Below is a statement by Lynne Karsten, one of the candidates.

I am interested in being a member of CHCP's Board of Directors because I believe consumer participation on the Board is an essential and appropiate part of a total health-care delivery system. I support the concept of comprehensive health care plans and would like to assist in the continued growth of CHCP. In addition. I feel I have much to contribute to the functioning of the Board, based on my past experiences.

The health-care experiences I have had come primarily from my employment at the Hill Health Center in New Haven (a comprehensive health-care facility.) I started with the program at its inception in 1967(as Administrative Assistant) and was involved in most aspects of its development. In particular, I served on various ad-hoc committees at the Center and frequently participated in meetings of the Center's Personnel Committee and Board of Directors.

This five-year experience gave me the opportubity to see the possibilities for health providers and consumers of the health services to work together with the end result being a health-care facility satisfactory to both the provider and the consumer.

Procedural Issues

There are two Board election procedures which I would want to revise:
1) The ~~elction~~ guidelines this year allow only the primary participants to actually vote on the consumer board members. I believe this rule should be revised to include all adult members of the plan being allowed to vote in this election.
2) The election guidelines also require in person balloting. I would want to consider another voting procedure for the election, since a considerable portion of the enrollees live outside the city limits. However, I hope that subscribers will make the effort to come in to vote this year.

Health Issues

Among the health issues I would like the Board review the following:
1) Preventive dental care for children. Recently I did a comparison of the Hill Health Center, the Yale Health Plan, CHCP and the Fair Haven Community Health Clinic. Adequate(or any)preventive dental care is extremely weak in all of them with the exception of the Hill. I understand the rationale that the extraordinary expense of providing dental care as a part of the basic plan would eliminate CHCP from being competitive with other health insurance plans. However, I would advocate initiation of preventive dental care for children as a start towards correcting the current situation.
2) An increase in out-patient psychiatric services. This could be either in the form of an insurance rider offered to members of CHCP or by increasing the number of visits provided at CHCP.

I have been a resident of New Haven area since 1966. I was the spokeswoman and Area Coordinator for YNFAC(Yale Non-Faculty Action Committee), the attempt to organize clerical and technical employees at Yale. I served as Co-Chairperson for a Voter Registration Drive in New Haven in 1972 and coordinated the Price Watch-Dog Committee, sponsored by the Greater New Haven Central Labor Council. I am presently the Administrator at the Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven. I am also a part-time student at Southern Conn. State College.

school notes

Open-Classroom May Be Boost to Learning

by Ruth Hein

As newpapers continue to carry stories of schools closing all over the country(either temporarily, as budgets are exhausted, or permanently as " underutilized" schools are absorbed into larger units), the battle of open education versus the "fundamental school" sharpens. During the last 15 years the methods of the English Infant Schools in educating children in humane environments had been widely adapted to American schoolrooms—until the last couple of years, when the reaction has predictably and vehementlyset in.

As a people, we are always eager to adopt new methodologies to remedy complex ills. Reform movements in education are usually supported by findings that learning rates are declining. Beginning with "Why Johnny Can't Read" in the early 1950's, the emphasis in educational change has always been on functional alterations in technical skills. As a result, the backlash is very strong when the touted new method does not in fact change results on tests very much.

What is overlooked , of course, is that the methodological difference between so-called open education and its opposites— the self-contained classroom, traditional education, or fundamental schooling—is based, not on economic/computer models(input-output) but on political attitudes about people and their values.

Basic School Ideals

The basic function of schooling has always been to prepare the next generation to fulfill its functions within the national society. At one time, for example, great emphasis was placed on penmanship; the common use of typewriters removed this subject from its central position. More importantly, however, the hidden curriculum emphasizes character traits—respect for authority among pupils destined to perform mechanical tasks, inventiveness and creativity among the group selected to lead. These traits are cultivated almost unconsciously, through systems of rewards and punishments.

The open-classroom movement tends to minimize such attempts at predicting and regulating future function. It takes its impetus from an ideal of the human child as naturally curious and enjoying the acquisition of knowledge. By giving children the respect of trusting them to take responsibility for themselves, the open-classroom adherents do not abdicate their charge of imparting learning; rather, theyfoster a spirit of sharing with the child the decisions about the way and the speed the necessary skills are acquired.

Total Classroom Control

The traditional classroom , set up on authoritarian lines, implicitly relies on a view of humankind as inherently unimprovable unless pushed and coerced. Even the most gifted and warm-hearted teachers in the traditional setting find themselves in positions of total power over the students.

There is something inevitably attractive about this later pattern, even from the children's point of view. "Back to basics," while involving the whole power trip, nevertheless promises simple techniques for performing measuable tasks. When the results fall short(twelfth-graders reading at the eight-grade level, say), it is easy to apply seeming remedies— increasing the number of hours reading is taught each week, for example—so that everyone involved gets the feeling that something positive is being done. Alternately, by blaming the victim—the students themselves or their home environments—the educational establishment has persuasive explanations for the shortcomings that do not affect the existing methods.

Cost is Heavy

The adherents of open-classroom education have a much harder job. The current recession is designed to send people running for simple answers and less expensive methods. It is possible, for example(though not desirable), , for one teacher to lecture 40 children, while the instructor in an open environment cannot deal fairly with more than 15 or 20 children. Open education therefore requires a larger payroll—though, it must be added, teachers can work very well in an open setting with aides and even parent volunteers; in addition to its other advantages, open education removes some of the mystique of professionalism.

We are therefore hearing lately about the increase in "fundamental schools" and the abandonment of "open " innovations. Nevertheless, the adnerents of open education are not giving up the fight. Last month 500 educators espousing the open philosophy gathered in New York to support each other and review progress. The Rockefeller Brothers Fund has underwritten new evaluations of open classrooms. Bank Street College of Education and Boston University have both established training centers in open methods. And Lillian Weber, one of the most eminent figures in the movement, is making plans for a lobbyling and public information office in Washington. It may not improve reading scores directly, but by encouraging children to grow into stronger, more responsive people, open education may in the end lead to greater learning in all areas.

Cheerful Footnote

This year's Oratorical Contest for the eighth-grade students in Fair Haven Middle School was won hands down by a boy reciting Eugene Deb's address to the judge on receiving sentence. The words of socialism sounded awfully good in the school auditorium.

Powderhouse Day 1975

Vittorio Comisso

The New Haven Peoples Bicentennial Commission, largely local artists interested in politics, staged a peoples history play on the N.H. Green in celebration of Powder House Day(April 25). To underline the relevance of our revolutionary heritage, they drew a parallel between the seizure of powder for the revolutionary army and the fight for public power. There was also singing, speeches and a good time was had by all.

Grow Your Own And Save

Ruth Stout

Phyllis Thorne

by Phyllis Thorne

If you're horrified as we all are these days when you go to the grocery store to pick up a few items and come out with one bag of groceries with no meat- and $10 or $15 poorer, then maybe you'd be interested in growing your own food this year.

There are a lot of "how-to" books around this year for people who've never had a garden. Most of these books try to sell everything from expensive tools to special seeds and try to convince the readers that they need all kinds of special equipment to get a good crop and save money.

There is a woman who's been gardening all her life who says you don't need expensive equipment, special seeds, tested and treated soil and more important you don't need to do much work. Her name is Ruth Stout.

Miss Stout is 90years old and has lived and farmed in Redding Connecticut for many years. She still has her garden and does all the work in an area of 45 feet by 50 feet, that feeds two people all year round, and says she could really use less space.

Money No Problem

What I like most about Miss Stout's attitude towards gardening is that she doesn't advocate spending a lot of money on things. With a little ingenuity and leg work you can pretty much locate everything you need for little to no money-excepť probally the seeds.

The basis of her gardening —mulch— works, I've tried it. Mulch is any kind of organic matter—kitchen scraps(not meat as it attracts animals), wood ashes, leaves, spoiled hay, wood chips and grass clippings.

When you put all these things into and on top of your garden soil , it becomes enriched so you don't need expensive fertilizer; lightened in case you have clay soil; and holds water better so you don't have to spend money watering your garden everyday.

As a bonus if you put enough mulch on top of your soil, weeds can't grow so you don't have to spend back breaking hours in the hot sun fighting weeds. I tried mulching last year and hardly weeded at all.

Much Better With Mulch

How to use the mulch? Dig up the soil first. Miss Stout claims you only have to do that once and then never again as long as you garden. If you never had a garden in the spot you choose you may consider renting a rotor tiller which goes for about $13 a day . This is a lot of money so I just turned my soil over with a shovel. It is back breaking work, but if you remember you only have to do it once then its not too bad.

Next turn the mulch that you've cut or broken up as small as possible(use a lawn mower to cut up the leaves)into the soil. This is best donein the fall but its not necessary. Then put more mulch as high as you can(between 4-8 inches all around) all over the garden. Pull the mulch away from the spots youput the seeds, plant and then push it back up but loosely. That's it. Sit back, relax and wait to pick your vegetables.

Other Garden Helpers

It's as simple as that. Every time you're outside mowing the grass or raking put the leaves and clippings on top, along with kitchen scraps and any other organic matter you can find around. As time goes by the bottom layer of mulch will rot and enrich the soil so you'll never have to fertilize again.

I think of all the gardening books around and hers are the best and most fun to read. She's a feisty old lady with a great sense of humor. You can get her books at the library or buy them for about $2 each. You don't even have to buy them all. Read one. You'll get the basic idea of mulching and be inspired to garden.

Books by Ruth Stout. How to have a Green Thumb Without an Aching Back and **Gardening Without Work** both paperback Cornerstone Publication. Also, **The No Work Garden Book** Bantam Pub.

on the job

Artist Paints for Social Change

by Fethi Meghelli as told to Phil Singerman.

Fethi Meghelli, a thirty year old Algerian painter, came to live in the United States—and New Haven—last summer. Recently, **Modern Times** talked with Fethi to learn his views on art, work and politics.

How did you first get interested in painting? When I was young I painted and sketched. It was a pleasure for me, just like a game.

My parents also saw it as a game, but when it became a very strong interest, and I said I wanted to study art in school, that was hard for my parents to accept. They said that it was not serious, that painting is something you can do on a Sunday.

But in high school I realized that art is not just for pleasure; for me, painting is a social art, it comes from within me, but it is for the people too. My art expresses the way I understand people and helps me understand how society works.

How would you describe your paintings?

Some people would call it expressionism, but that doesn't mean very much. Most of of my paintings are scenes from my native Algeria, but the way I paint —the material I use— is not Algerian but French. I have Algerian culture, but I also have French culture, and my paintings express both.

In Algerian culture we don't have paintings on canvas. The canvas is a new thing for Algerians, a western thing. We had artisan crafts, we had different materials to use for art. The ideas on how to draw, how to paint, were western ideas, and of a particualr class.

Painting has always been upper class, or bourgeoise. When you learn to draw or paint, it is a bourgeoise way to paint. But the problem is, you can't learn from nothing, you have to start from something. When you are in school, they give you the method. I had to take what I learned in school and change it.

How does your art work reflect your politics? In general art is for a certain class of people, because we live in a society dominated by the upper class. Right now, the culture, the art is for a minority of people. Our task is to change society, so that art can be for everyone, so that everyone can paint, everyone can write.

How can you do that? You can't have art for everyone immediately. It's a long way, a struggle, trying to change things. My ideas are to change society by working with other people. The artists have to be involved, working with people, because otherwise they are isolated.

When you work with people, when you talk with them, when you understand them, then you have ideas, and those ideas you can find in your paintings. To do that involves practice, in theory and in painting. I am learning all the time.

It's very imporatnt to show your work everywhere, if you can. That's a problem, because the only place where I can exhibit is in small galleries, and only a certain category of people go there. Artists have to have exhibits in places where lots of people go, like schools, public buildings and festivals.

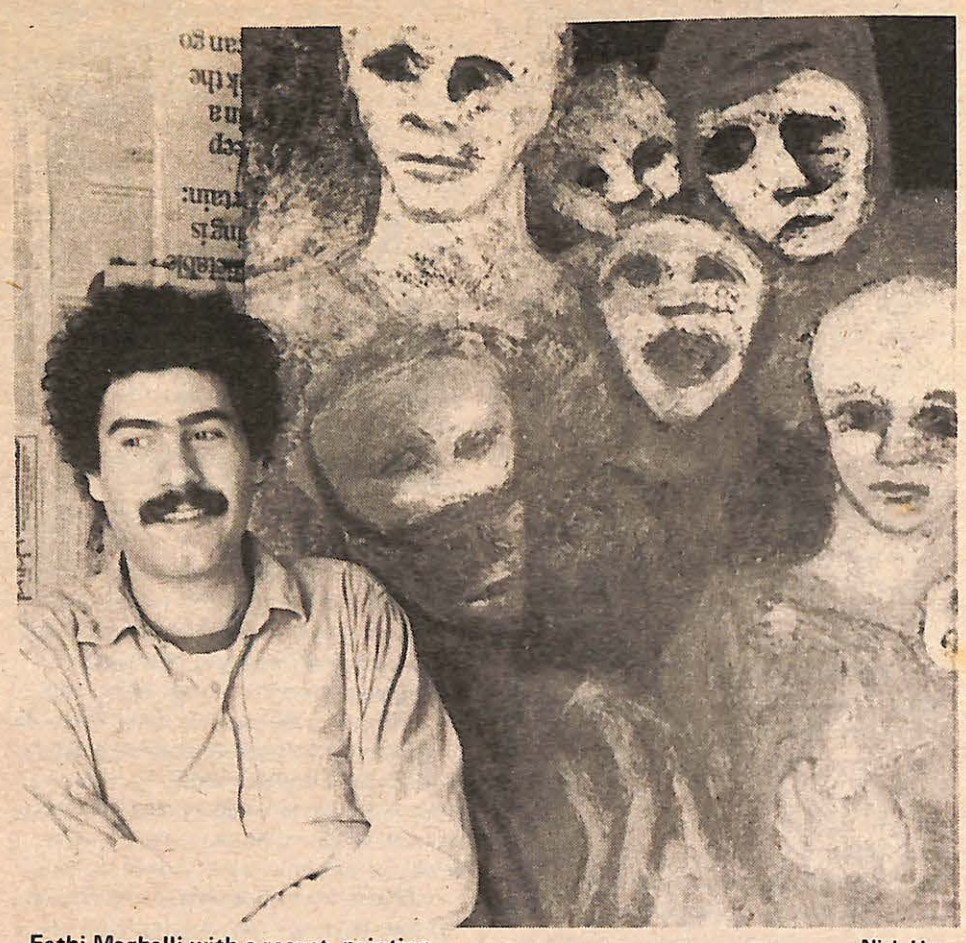
Do you live from your paintings? It's very rare when an artist lives from his paintings. I always have to find other work. Fortunately , I have a job although it doesn't pay much. I work with teenagers in an after-school youth center, trying to help them learn to paint. My problem is to figure out how to give them some things to work with, to express themselves in more interesting ways than drawing Kung-Fu fights.

Most of the kids are Puerto Ricans and blacks, and for me that means something. I think I can understand their feelings. Because in Algeria, the same feelings that colonialism creates makes you paint, draw one way. So now I am trying to find out how to show them that there are many ways to paint. So far it's very difficult.

How do you feel about your development as an artsist? *My painting is still petty-bourgeoise. The solution is to work with different artists, talking about what is happening in society, what the relationship is between art and politics, and learning more about us and more about other people.*

My goal is to make art for and by everybody, andthis means not only art, it means working in different ways. You can't change just one thing, you have to change everything.

EDITOR'S NOTE: There will be an exhibition of the paintings and sketches of Fethi Maghelli at the York Square Cinema from May 9th to June 8th.



Fethi Meghelli with a recent painting. Nick Heyer

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The Answer is Solidarity

continued from page 2

labor showed some real muscle. *What I'm proposing is a strategy of mas_ive statewide demonstrations and political strikes.*

We could start with rallies and marches in Hartford demanding the right to strike. Other demonstrations could be planned in other major cities. It might make sense to picket politicians' places of business. The next step would be coordinated one day strikes. Several major cities and towns could walk out in protest against the anti-strike laws or in favor of tax reform.

State-wide Pressure

We could build toward a state teacher strike. Why not? The courts say education is a state responsibility. Then let's use statewide pressure. The strength of teachers might not be enough. We've got to think about actions planned in conjunction with other school employees and ultimately other municipal and state workers.

To launch mass demonstartions and strikes we would have to build up our own strength and solidarity enormously . To this end I have two ideas, each of which is controversial. The first is the Connecticut State Federation of Teachers(CSFT) is going to have to work together with its competition the Conn. Education Association.

Need a Majority

How can the minority CSFT ever expect to win statewide victories alone. At our current rate of expansion we won't speak for 50% of Connecticut's teachers until the year 2000. I think we've got to propose cooperation on a militant statewide program to the CEA and let them make up their minds.

If they join with us they become more of a militant union. If they refuse, the onus is on them and Connecticut teachers will look with more sympathy on CSFT organizing drives.

A second idea is to organize unemployed teachers into existing locals. If we ignore the unemployed, they continue to meanace as potential strikebreakers. If we could add them to existing locals as non-voting members we could win their loyality and their support during demonstrations . In turn they could get insurance at group rates and more important, assurance that the teacher unions would press for more jobs.

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